The Contribution of Jainism and Buddhism to the Cultural Unity of India[1]

The subject may be treated under three heads: 1. The History of Jainism and Buddhism; 2. Their metaphysics and 3. Their rituals. I have to say a few words on the history of the two great religions, because even today there are some educated people who are unable to distinguish between Jainism and Buddhism, who mistake Jainism to be an off-shoot of Buddhism, and who consider both Jainism and Buddhism to be branches of Hinduism. Thanks to the efforts of the compilers of the Cambridge History of Ancient India, it is now accepted that Jainism is older than Buddhism and that Lord Mahavira who lived from 599 B. C. to 527 B. C. was not the founder of Jainism and that his predecessor, Lord Parswa who lived 250 years earlier was also a historical person. According to Jaina tradition Lord Mahavira was the twenty-fourth Tirthankara and Lord Parswa was the 23rd Tirthankara. Looking back into the past we find Lord Neminath, referred to in the Vedas as Arishta Nemi, the 22nd Tirthankara, who was a cousin of Lord Krishna of *Mahabharata* fame. This Krishna is also accepted by the Jains as a Vasudeva and is expected to be born as a Tirthankara in the coming cycle of time. Going still deeper into the past, we find Lord Rishabha of the Ikshvaku clan, the first Tirthankara of the Jains preaching his doctrine of Ahimsa to the early Aryans. This same Lord Rishabha is praised in the Rig Vedic hymns and adored as an incarnation of Vishnu in *Srimad Bhagavatam* and other Hindu Puranas. The names of his parents found in the Hindu books are the same as those found in the Jaina version. His son was Bharata, the eponymous emperor

[1] Based on a lecture.

of India, after whom the country is called Bharata Varsha. After leading the life of a householder and helping mankind by teaching them various means of livelihood such as agriculture, trade, arts and crafts and organising the society into groups according to the duties allotted to them, he became a homeless monk to illustrate to the people the rules of conduct of an ascetic. As a result of austere *tapasya*, he attained omniscience, *kevala jnana*. Out of unbounded compassion for the struggling humanity, the Lord taught the way of salvation to all those who gathered around him. After spreading his message of Ahimsa in several parts of the country for a long time he moved up to Mount Kailas where he attained Nirvana, The day of his attaining Nirvana or Moksha is celebrated by the Jains as the Mahasivaratri.

The doctrine of Ahimsa as preached by Lord Rishabha was regarded as a high ideal and was being practised by a group of people side by side with those who were for performing *yagas* involving animal sacrifice with cruelty and bloodshed, as enjoined in the Vedas. The Jains along with the Buddhists who were also followers of Ahimsa openly rejected the Vedas in as much as they praised the efficacy of performing *yagas*. Throughout the history of the religious thought in India these two schools, one upholding the doctrine of Ahimsa and the other performing vedic sacrifice are found to live side by side, sometimes one coming to prominence and sometimes the other predominating.

Regarding the interpretation of the term Aja which is very important for a Vedic sacrifice, we have an interesting episode narrated in *Makabharata*. The story says that once there was a serious discussion between the Devas and the Rishis as to what exactly was meant by Aja. The Devas said that the word referred to a goat whereas the Rishis who were all followers of Ahimsa maintained that the term referred to only paddy, which was kept for over three years and which had lost its potency to sprout. Since both the parties were

equally strong and were not willing to yield to the views of the other they had to approach the King Uparichara Vasu for a decision in the matter. The king who was afraid of the Devas gave his verdict in their favour, to the effect that he accepted their interpretation of the term Aja to mean a goat. This was a shock to the Rishis who exclaimed, 'Oh, Great King Vasu, what is it that you have said. You have grossly misinterpreted the holy text of the Vedas. If you have given the wrong interpretation let the punishment be on you. Let the earth open its mouth and devour you. If, on the other hand, our interpretation is wrong let that punishment come to us.' No sooner were these words uttered by the holy Rishis than the earth yawned and down went Uparichara Vasu deep into the nether regions. From that day onward the Rishis seceded from the Vedic school of thought. They rejected the Vedas as they had come to sanction the performance of animal sacrifices. This story of Uparichara Vasu and his erroneous interpretation of Vedic mantras, *Ajenayashtavyaya, is found* narrated in Jain sacred literature in exactly the same terms when the Jains explained why they could not accept the present Vedas which according to them is a perverse substitute to the old Veda based upon Ahimsa. This old Adi Veda founded upon the doctrine of Ahimsa is associated with Lord Rishabha of the Ikshvaku clan. This Rishabha cult must have been in existence long before the composition of the Rig Vedic hymns. That such a religious cult was in existence in ancient India is fully borne out by the relics of an ancient culture, discovered in excavations of Mohenjodaro and Harappa. Figures of Yogi in standing posture in a naked form have been found in these remains which according to the scholars represent the idols worshipped by the people of that age. Probably this refers to Lord Rishabha the first Tirthankara of the Jains who preached the doctrine of Ahimsa and himself practised the method of yoga or *tapas*. This Rishabha cult of the Ikshvaku clan as circumstantially supported by the remains of the Indus Valley civilisation must have been prior to the advent of the Aryans who were responsible for the composition of the Rig Vedic hymns. Oriental

scholars are of the opinion that this represented the second wave of invading Aryans, whereas the Ikshvakus representing the Rishabha cult are designated as the early Aryans.

As time rolled on and later Aryans came to India the early Aryans moved towards the East and settled in the countries of Kasi, Kosala, Videha, and Magadha. It is very interesting to note that out of the 24 Tirthankaras who were all Kshatriyas, nearly 20 of them belonged to the Ikshvaku clan. Kalidasa says that the Raghus who were all of the Ikshvaku clan begin their lives as students, then enjoy life as house-holders during the early part of their life, then take to asceticism during the latter part and finally obtain liberation by performing *tapas*. This description goes to corroborate the Jaina tradition about the Kshatriya heroes of the Ikshvaku family. It is peculiarly interesting to note that the warrior class in India, unlike those of the same class in other countries concerned themselves very much in the discussion and investigation of truth. And curiously enough truth was first sought for in India by the Kshatriyas and consequently they came to lead the rest. This seems to be the common characteristic of the Upanishads which mainly owe their composition to Kshatriyas. Thus it would appear that the doctrine of Ahimsa and the consequent self-discipline or Yoga was championed by the Kshatriya thinkers whereas the orthodox priests of the western country of Kurupanchala were the custodians of the ritualistic lore of Vedic sacrifice. In the Upanishadic discussions we find the orthodox priests going to Kshatriya heroes with the request to be initiated into the Atma Vidya which they recognised to be of higher status than their own ritualistic lore. It was in the Atma Vidya that the Vedic sacrifices were severely condemned as not only useless but also obstructive to the evolution of the soul. In the Brahmanas there is an interesting fact where the author calls the people living in the countries of Kasi, Kosala, Videha, and Magadha as *bhrashtas*, dissenters or non-conformists, implying that they were Aryans nevertheless.

The reason indeed is not far to seek. The Aryans of the Gangetic plains or as we shall say the Eastern Aryans who occupied the Eastern countries preached a topsyturvy religious system. They did not stop with the mere condemnation of the Vedic sacrifices. They also said that to perform them was sinful and to avoid them was virtuous. Thus they not only withdrew merit from one side of the scale but placed it on the opposite side and made the difference all the greater. It may be supposed with great probability to truth that these Eastern Aryans who revolted against the Vedic ritualism and preached the supremacy of Atma were evidently the ancient Jaina thinkers.

Linguistic history tells us that the early Aryans and especially the Kshatriyas who lived in the Eastern countries spoke some form of Prakrit for which the Kurupanchala Aryans ridiculed them for their supposed corrupt and faulty pronunciation of the Aryan tongue. Since it is a fact too well known that the earliest Jaina works were written in Prakrit only, it may be concluded even from a scientific point of view that the early Aryans who had settled in the Kingdoms of Kasi, Kosala, Videha and Magadha were Jains. Thus in due course of time two divergent views came to be held in upper India. (1). The Kurupanchala Aryans or the later Aryans or those who had settled on the plains of the Punjab upholding the Vedic culture with all its elaborate rituals and sacrifices, known also as Aparavidya with the Brahmins or the priestly class at their head, and (2). The early Aryans who had settled on the Gangetic plains, who spoke a dialect similar to Prakrit and who denounced all vedic sacrifices and ceremonialism and who introduced a new philosophical cult known as Atma Vidya or Para Vidya with the Kshatriyas or warriors at their head since they were the discoverers and custodians of the New Thought. Evidently these two rival schools of thought, which were found to be existing from the very earliest times had now become poles asunder and as such could not be easily reconciled. But fortunately for India, the new cult gained enormous following and influence and

the Kurupanchala Aryans thought it high time to come to a compromise with their rival and Eastern brethren. Thus the age became one of intense discussion, research and introspection and finally the Kurupanchalas and their priests gave up the ceremonial technique and flocked to the royal courts to be initiated into the new mysteries as I have already referred to. Thereupon a reconciliation was effected and the doctrine of Ahimsa came to be accepted by the Vedic Aryans gradually. Hence in the later Brahmanas it is expressed that animal sacrifices can very well be replaced by offerings of cakes without loss of efficacy or spiritual importance. Evidently this marks a a tendency to compromise and reconciliation. The extreme left wing of the early Aryans must have remained outside without accepting the reconciliation and perhaps formed the forerunners of the later Buddhistic school. The influential central party would mark the early Jains.

Now regarding the history of Buddhism, I have not to say much. You all know that it was founded by Gautama Sakya Muni, who was a younger contemporary of Lord Mahavira. Here we may note that the Sakya clan of Kshatriyas to which he belonged, proudly claimed its origin from the Ikshvakus. Like Jainism it also gained support from the ruling chiefs and the cultured people since it also rejected the authority of the Vedas, vehemently opposed the caste system and preached universal brotherhood and upheld the doctrine of Ahimsa; but as it preached *anitya* and *anatma vada* it was found to be *uncompromisable. That is why it* was considered antagonistic to Hinduism till it was finally blotted out of existence by Sankara and his followers. The personality of Lord Buddha was so great that the Hindus could not but raise him to the status of an Avatar as they have done in the case of Lord Rishabha the first Tirthankara of the Jains who lived and preached long long before the *traditional Avatars of Vishnu.*

At the time of Lord Buddha Jainism seems to have been a well established religion followed by a large section of the people. For according to the Buddhistic texts we

come to learn that Buddha himself was for sometime a naked Jaina saint practising the rules of conduct of a Jaina ascetic such as lying down on the bare ground, fasting and taking food from the palms of his hand. In course of time he found it difficult to practise these rules and so he began to adopt and preach the middle path (Madhyamamarga) midway between the extreme ascetic life of the Jains and the moral laxity of the other orders of ascetics. This is clearly indicated by his own description of his early ascetic life as narrated to his friend and disciple Sariputta. From this we understand that Buddhism was of later origin than Jainism.

Before taking leave of this section on history let us note certain significant facts of historical importance relating to South India. The present day Saivaism in South India is associated with the worship of Rudra, Siva or Kapaleswara whose praise is sung in the Thevara hymns. Still the Saivites speak of an Adi Saivasim where Siva is designated as the incarnation of love and mercy. There must have been a different from of religious ideal before the appearance of the present day cult of Kapaleswara. I am constrained to believe that the Adi Saivaism which was said to have been prevalent in South India was nothing but the Rishaba cult preaching Ahimsa. There are certain interesting facts which support our hypothesis. The place where Lord Rishabha attained Nirvana is associated with Mount Kailas where his son Bharata built a temple and installed an idol representing Lord Rishbha. This place sanctified by Lord Rishbha's *parinirvana* is considered sacred by the Saivites since it is considered to be the abode of Lord Siva. The Sivaratri (*parinirvana*) day of Lord Rishabha is also observed by the Saivites as a day of religious importance. The bull, an emblem which is usually engraved at the Peetha of Rishabha's image is converted into a *vahana* for the image of Siva. Several of the important names associated with Lord Rishabha such as Satyojathan, Aghoram, Esanan, and Tatpurushan are also applied to Lord Siva in the Hindu Puranas. Another striking resemblance is the application of the term Digambara which is applied to Lord Rihabha

who, renouncing all attachment to wordly things roamed about naked as a Digambara Muni. The same term Digambara is also applied to Lord Siva. The path to salvation is called Siva Marga, and Moksha itself is called Sivagati. When we look at the sacred literature of the Hindus and the Jains we find this curious fact that the terms, Mahadeva, Siva, Sivaswarupa, Sivagati, are first associated with Lord Rishabha and later on transferred to the deity of the later Saivaism which is the Rudra of the Vedic pantheon. Hence it is most probable that Lord Rishabha was the original Siva and the early Saivaism and Jainism were one and the same. The present day description of Síva as a deity having a garland of skulls round his neck, a tiger's skin for his lion cloth, and a *kapala* as a begging bowl and a *trisula* in his hands must be due to the introduction of the Kapalika system in South India during the period of Hindu revivalism. This Kapalika form of religion fully succeeded in displacing the early cult of Ahimsa Saivaism by a distinctly lower religous ideal, by catering to the tastes of the masses who wanted a deity with wife and children and with all the characteristics of a hero to their liking and with their comprehension.

Now let us turn to the metaphysics of the systems.

Jainism, Buddhism, and the Charvaka system are said to be non-Vedic systems as they do not accept the authority of the Vedas. For that reason they are also dubbed as Nastika schools of thought. But I think this is a misnomer. According to one accepted difinition a Nastika system is one which does not believe in Atma, Moksha and Mokshamarga. If this criterion is adopted then the Charvaka system alone will come under this head. One who studies Jainism and the other Indian systems will see an important underlying common ground between these systems. I can say with a certain amount of authority and confidence that the creation theory is not accepted by any of the Indian systems of philosophy. Kapila openly ridicules the creation theory and contends that it is quite impossible and untenable as a metaphysical doctrine. Patanjali speaks of an Iswara who is

not a creator but serves as a mere moral ideal for the other Purushas. Vedantism does not recognise the doctrine of creation. Sankara completely throws overboard the Vedic account of creation as purely a *vyavaharic* fiction. Mimamsa similarly rejects the doctrine and does not recognise any creator or the possibility of creation.

The strongest and the most logical condemnation of the creation theory is found in the Mimamsa system which is perhaps the most orthodox of the Hindu Darsanas in as much as it emphsises the authority of the Vedas to be supreme. The Vedas according to them are eternal and ***apaurusheya***. The only Vedic Darsanas which *prima facie* appear to recognise the doctrine of creation are the Nyaya and Vaiseshika schools. Even here the ultimate principles of atoms and souls are taken to be eternal and uncreated. The work of the creator consists merely in building up a body suitable to each Jiva or Atma according to its merit or demerit. The Jaina view does not amount to anything more than what is already contained in the Vedic Darsanas. If Jaina Darsana is condemned as Nastika for the simple reason of rejecting the doctrine of creation then the title would be applicable to every Hindu Vedic Darsana with equal justification. The criterion of Astika Darsana consists of three fundamental doctrines which are present in the six Hindu Darsanas as well as the Jaina Darsana. They are:—

1. Atma with *upadhis.* 2. Atma without *upadhis.* 3. The path for the realisation of the Pure Self, Atma, Moksha, and Mokshamarga. The reality of Atman or individual personality is emphasised in Jaina Darsana as it is done in other Hindu Darsanas except in Sankara's Advaitism. Even in the Advaitic conception of Atma there is an implicit recognition of individual personality. This is evidenced by Sankara's commentary on an important Vedanta Sutra, where in answer to a *purvapaksha* he admits that the differences in individual enjoyments are entirely accountable by their respective karmas.

According to Jainism the universe is also eternal though it may undergo changes during the course of ages.

There are infinite number of souls existing in different forms of life according to their own karmas. Every Jiva is potentially divine, but its divine attributes are limited or obstructed by these karmas. The conception of karma according to Jainism is a very important and significant contribution to metaphysics. When a person thinks of doing a thing there is in him what is called the Bhava karma. When he actually does the thing there is Dravya Karma produced. Jaina metaphysicians believe that there are very subtle particles of matter called *Karmic varganas* in the space which bind the soul whenever it does a deed due to *krodha, mana, maya* or *lobha*, anger, pride, deceit, or greed. These karmic particles bind the soul whether one actually does the deed, induces others to do the deed or approves of the deed done by others. These karmas constitute the karmic body which is associated with the soul throughout its career of transmigration producing its appropriate results, till it is finally cast away and destroyed when the soul attains moksha or perfection.

When a soul gets itself free from all karmas it attains full divinity, becomes a Paramatma and begins to enjoy infinite bliss, infinite power, etc. This is the conception of God or Paramatma according to Jainism. Though Sankara and Jainism agree in maintaining the ultimate identity of Jeevatma and Paramatma, yet the Jaina ideal of Paramatma with infinite qualities will be found to be different from Sankara's ideal of Nirguna Brahman. But Ramanuja is one with the Jaina system in his conception of God with infinite qualities. There is no coming back of this liberated soul to the mundane world again because a perfect being cannot become imperfect and hence the theory of Avatar according to which God is said to be born in flesh and blood is not acceptable to the Jains. Existence in Moksha or Nirvana has a beginning but no end, whereas mundane existence of the imperfect soul had no beginning but can have an end.

Mokshamarga or way to salvation according to Jainism consists of right faith, right knowledge and right conduct.

Samyak Darsana, Samyak Jnana and Samyak Charitra. Right belief is defined as belief in the existence of the Tattvas or realities as they are. Right knowledge is said to be a correct understanding of the nature of these realities. Right conduct is described as living according to the ethical principles prescribed in the sacred books. This conduct is two-fold,—one for the laymen or house-holders and the other for ascetics or Munis. The religious vows to be practised by the laymen are called Anu Vratas (small vows) and those of the ascetics are said to be Maha Vratas (great vows). But all these vows have for their basis the great doctrine of Ahimsa. Every vow should be subordinated to the strict observance of Ahimsa. In the case of a layman who has to live in this world and perform his duties the Ahimsa vow is limited; for example, he can make use of the vegetable kingdom only to that extent to which his necessity requires. But he is prohibited from killing any of the mobile beings, *i.e.*, those that posses two senses and more. In the case of the ascetics all the vows are to be observed strictly and completely without any fault.

Some systems hold that faith is enough for salvation while some maintain that knowledge is sufficient for spiritual liberation, while some others believe that conduct (*charitra*) will make the soul free from the turmoils of worldly existence. But Jainism emphasises that all these three are equally important and essential for spiritual emancipation.

As for the rituals, we find that Buddhism has nothing at all whereas Jainism has as much rituals as or even more than those of Brahminism. We have got *upanayana* (initiation into Sandhyavandana and Gayatri); marriage, etc., in short all the sixteen *samskaras* associated with the life of an orthodox Brahmin. Jaina boys and girls are initiated into the religious life of a house-holder with the *upanayana samskara* when they are taught the Mahamantra of the Jains. The boys are taught in addition the Gayatri and the Sandhyavandana. The rituals performed in the Jaina temples are probably more elaborate than

those in the Hindu temples. A word about Homa. Homa or fire sacrifice is so important in the life of a Jaina householder that no ceremony can be conducted without Homa or fire sacrifice. This point must be emphasised here because very many non Jaina scholars maintain erroneously that Jainism has nothing to do with Homa or fire sacrifice. For example, wherever there is a description of marriage Homa, they come to the absurd conclusion that the parties concerned could not be Jains. Such an opinion is entirely due to the ignorance of the actual facts. Even now if you witness a marriage ceremony in a Jaina household you can see the marriage Homa with all its elaborate details, such as making fire with *samit*, pouring clarified butter, milk and fried paddy over the fire and invoking the Gods such as Indra, Varuna, Agni, and Vayu, etc., who figure here as Dikpalakas. The truth is that what is rejected by Jainism is *yaga*, the Vedic sacrifice, which involves the killing of animals and not Homa or Fire sacrifice as such. In order to bring out this distinction, the term used in Tamil literature to designate Homa or Fire sacrifice is வேள்வி (Velvi) while the term used to refer to *yaga* or Vedic sacrifice is வேதவேள்வி (Vedavelvi). It is the latter that is rejected by the *sramanas* ((Jains) for which they were persecuted and destroyed according to the Thevara hymns. I am led to think that in spite of bitter animosity and severe religious persecution Jainism was allowed to live side by side with Hinduism because of the ritualistic side of the Jaina system. The Jains and the Hindus joined together in opposing Buddhism for its teaching of Anatma Vada, denial of soul. But the Hindus opposed both the Jains and the Buddhists for their not accepting the authority of the Vedas. Though Hindu revivalists tried to completely destroy both Jainism and Buddhism, the former managed to survive till the present day because of its ritualistic side, which emphasised its similarity to the Brahmanical rituals. But in spite of this commonness of ritualism which probably accounts for its survival, Jainism is not favourably appreciated by the Hindus because of its uncompromising rationalism and hence its opposition to Puranic Hinduism. The Jaina teachings are well founded on logic. The Jaina thinkers

always warn people against accepting anything that is not subject to reason. That is why such superstitious practices as bathing in an ocean or a river in the hope of getting rid of sins, offering animal sacrifices to God and Goddesses to ward off epidemics or to get children or wealth or prosperity and bowing down to and serving the so-called Sadhus, being deceived by their outward appearances, tricks. and hypocritical words, are vehemently condemned by Jainism.

I have to say a few words on the creation of the sect of Brahmins according to the Jaina account. I have already told you that Jainism does not believe in the caste system based on birth. We have already seen how Lord Rishabha organised the human socitey into three groups according to their profession namely, administration, trade and service. But his son, Emperor Bharata, after subjugating all the then known world came to Ayodhya, his capital. Since the society had become complex by that time he wanted to entrust the duties connected with the spiritual welfare of the people to the chosen few, well qualified for the function. He called his ministers and consulted them. They suggested to the emperor that he might appoint for the purpose those who were spiritually advanced and who were practising Ahimsa strictly. In order to select such people the following method was adopted. The emperor sent a proclamation throughout the realm inviting people for a feast. On the appointed day, the emperor ordered that grains with fresh sprouts be strewn on all the pathways of the imperial palace before the gates were open. There was a huge congregation of people waiting to enter. When the signal was given and the gates were thrown open the people rushed in, and occupied the seats allotted to them. When Bharata asked if all the people had come in, he was told that there were still many standing outside. He asked some of his ministers to go and bring them; but the people told the ministers that they could not come in because the pathways leading to the palace were full of tender sprouts of grains and that they should not trample over them and injure them as they were strict followers of

Ahimsa and that they should not injure even the one-sensed plant life. When Bharata heard this he was greatly pleased and instructed his ministers to bring the remaining people by another gate. The emperor then saluted these people for their religious merit, invested them with the function of Brahmins, who had to instruct the peopie on the significance of Ahimsa Dharma and thus take care of their spiritual welfare. Thus arose the Brahma Kula according to Jainism. The author of *Kural* makes a significant referenc to this fact in the following couplet:—

அந்தணர் நூற்கு மறத்திற்கு மாதியாய்

நின்றது மன்னவன் கோல்

Even to-day the Jains especially those living in the Tamil country have all their religious functions and social ceremonies such as marriage, etc., performed with the help of their own Brahmin purohits who are all followers of Jainism and practisers of Ahimsa.

As for the contribution to the cultural unity of India, Jainism and Buddhism have done a good deal. Buddhism breaking down all barriers of caste and discarding every kind of ritual welcomed one and all to embrace Buddhism. This catholic attitude was perhaps responsible for the rapid spread of Buddhism not only in India, but also in other parts of Asia. But as I have already pointed out it was the Anatma philosophy of Buddhism that brought about its fall here. Like Jainism it also preached Ahimsa, but its Ahimsa was limited and may be said to be lip-service only, for it has allowed its followers to eat meat and fish so much so that even Buddhist monks take meat freely. But this is not the case with Jainism. Every Jaina, whether he is a layman or an ascetic, is prohibited from eating flesh of any kind. They have said that it is not only sinful to kill a life for the sake of meat but it is equally sinful to purchase it which according to the Buddhists is not objectionable. This idea is not accepta-

ble and convincing to the Jainas as may be seen from the following couplet in the *Kural*:—

> தினன்பொருட்டாற் கொள்ளாதுலகெனின் யாரும்
> விலைப்பொருட்டா லூன்றருவா ரில்

It is evident from Sanskrit literature that even Brahmins during the Middle Ages had a partiality for meat as may be seen from *Uttararamacharita*. The almost complete disappearance of animal sacrifice in Yagna, the wholesale conversion of the Brahmins and high caste Hindus as vegetarians, the purity of worship in the temples and the simple living of the people which all are found in South India at present are due to the influence of Jainism.

In its lofty conception of Atma, in its scientific treatment of the nature of karma and its association with Atma and in its upholding of Ahimsa as the highest ethical principle, Jainism stands unrivalled. Both Jainism aud Buddhism have contributed a good deal to the literature, architecture and paintings in the land.

There is a mistaken notion even among the educated classes that the preaching of Ahimsa has brought degeneration among the Indian people. No reader of Indian history can fail to see that the most glorious periods were the periods when Jaina emperors, like Chandragupta, Asoka, Karavela, Vikramaditya and Amoghavarsha were ruling. They were all followers of Ahimsa.

The introduction of temple building may also be attributed to the influence of Jainism according to which Samavasarana is the place where the Tirthankara. sits in the middle and all living beings gather around Him to hear his teachings. This Samavasarana is said to have four *gopuras* with gateways, and seven *prakaras*, where tanks, gardens, halls for music and dances are located. Ancient Jaina tradition says that the idea of building temples and

worshipping the images of Tirthankaras in them had its beginning when Bharata built a temple for Lord Rishabha on Mount Kailas.

In this connection I may quote here a historical incident to corroborate my statement. King Karavela of Kalinga in his Hathigumpha inscription on Udayagiri Hill dated 170 B. C. makes mention of his campaign against Magadha when he brought back from Pataliputra, the image of Jina (Lord Rishabha) which had been carried away by King Nanda Vardhana about 454 B. C. from Kalinga. He reinstated it in his capital with elaborate ceremonies in which monarchs from distant parts like the Pandya Kingdom took part. This inscriptional evidence goes to prove that even in the 5th century B. C, there was the practice of temple worship among the Jains which was later on adopted by Puranic Hinduism.

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